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ties which had been produced by slavery were invoked to prove the incapacity of the colored race for freedom, so the feminine qualities that have been wrought by centuries of the subjection of women are to-day used as an argument why that subjection should continue.

I have thus sought to show—more by the suggestion of an argument than by any detailed elaboration of it—that the subjection of women in the past has been due, not to any natural inferiority of women, but primarily to the absorption of their energies by the maternal function, and secondarily to the social condition determining the degree of the exercise of that function. But I have also claimed that, with the improvement of the social state, setting free more and more of the energies of woman for other than purely domestic activities, and making possible her mental and physical adaptation to such activities, there has come, by a perfectly natural and necessary process, that change in the position of woman which even in its incomplete stage we are accustomed to call her emancipation.

I would finally urge that the claim made in these days of woman's equality with man is simply the expression and outcome of that revised meaning which modern life is giving to the function of maternity, and I hold that the movement thus begun, and so manifestly sanctioned by the evolutionary process, will be carried on to a sure and complete triumph, not by the generosity of men, and not by the advocacy of women, but by the whole of the influences that tend to improve the social state—in a word, by ever-advancing civilization. It is not that the woman of the future will cease to be a mother, but that motherhood will grow less and less arduous, and that its past disabilities will diminish until they finally disappear. The great problem of the age—how to emancipate women and preserve motherhood—is already more than half solved. The world has no longer need of the enormous sacrifices through which our sex has replenished the race in the past; the black eras of strife and cruelty are gone, and in the perfect social order which is coming, woman is to do something more than to suffer and toil—something more than to furnish her contingents to the industrial armies and navies of the world. She is to live.

LYDIA LVOVNA PIMENOFF.

FROM RENAN'S POINT OF VIEW.

"**THERE** does seem to be little that is even intellectually satisfying," writes John Fiske, the eminent evolutionist, "in the awful picture which science shows us, of giant worlds concentrating out of nebulous vapor, developing with prodigious waste of energy into theatres of all that is grand and sacred in spiritual endeavor, clashing and exploding again into dead vapor balls, only to renew the same toilful process without end,—a senseless bubble-play of Titan forces, with life, love, and aspiration brought forth only to be extinguished. The human mind, however 'scientific' its training, must often recoil from the conclusion that this is all; and there are moments when one passionately feels that this cannot be all. On warm June mornings in green country lanes, with sweet pine odors wafted in the breeze which sighs through the branches, and cloud shadows flitting over far-off blue mountains, while little birds sing their love songs, and golden-haired children weave garlands of wild roses; or when in the solemn twilight we listen to wondrous harmonies of Beethoven and Chopin that stir the heart like voices from an unseen world; at such times one feels that the profound-

est answer which science can give to our questionings is but a superficial answer after all. At these moments, when the world is fullest of beauty, one feels most strongly that it is but the harbinger of something else,—that the ceaseless play of phenomena is no mere sport of Titans, but an orderly scene, with its reason for existing, its

‘One divine far-off event,
To which the whole creation moves.’

“Difficult as it is to disentangle the elements of reasoning that enter into these complex groups of feeling, one may still see, I think, that it is speculative interest in the world, rather than anxious interest in self, that predominates. The desire for immortality in its lowest phase is merely the outcome of the repugnance we feel towards thinking of the final cessation of vigorous activity. Such a feeling is naturally strong with healthy people. But in the mood which I have tried to depict, this feeling, or any other which is merely self-regarding, is lost sight of in the feeling which associates a future life with some solution of the burdensome problem of existence.”

The thought which Mr. Fiske puts thus strongly and clearly—the repugnance to acknowledging as possible, quite apart from the question of personal immortality, so purposeless a career for the universe, with so much in it of dramatic suggestion—is a thought that to the average mind seems accentuated by the discoveries of modern science. The unity of nature, in substance and process, as revealed by these discoveries, impresses such a mind as having a distinctly teleological bearing. If through a wonderfully sensitive although impalpable luminiferous ether “every part of the universe shares in the life of all the other parts”; if the most distant stars show the same chemical composition as our own little abode called Earth; if everywhere we find evidence that the process of world-making is the same, by a similar development out of nebulous vapor;—the conclusion that universal unity has a teleological significance is for the average mind immensely strengthened. Put over against this significance Mr. Fiske’s eternal see-saw of development and destruction as the “superficial” interpretation by science of this purposeless universe, and the instinct of revolt against so ignoble and unworthy, not to say monstrous, an interpretation is infinitely intensified.

Given a man of unfaltering loyalty to the conclusions of science wherever they may lead him; a man of unreserved agnosticism so far at least as the record of his writings commits him; a man of so powerful a scientific imagination that, it has been said, he anticipated Darwin and Spencer; a man whose literary genius was poetical in its warmth and glow; a man who lived in history and made it live; a man of charming personality, to whom mere existing was a perpetual source of interest and pleasure—in short, a man who is a wonderful combination of scientific imagination, literary art, scholarly training, historical insight, and individual optimism, and confront him with the “intellectually unsatisfying” picture of the tendencies of phenomena as seen by the light of science, and what has M. Renan to offer of suggestion or hope?

The answer is a curious one, and is given in an article contributed to the *Revue des Deux Mondes* a great many years ago. This answer is condensed by E. P. Whipple in an essay on “Religion and Scientific Theories,” where it is referred to as an article “of which Renan’s admirers equally with his adversaries seem to be strangely ignorant.” Mr. Whipple in summarizing Renan’s article thus gives its substance: “Science shows that, in the

slow but sure operation of natural laws, the solar system must be destroyed. A million years is a comparatively short period in the figures of astronomy. If scientific men have during the past hundred and fifty years made such enormous advances in the discovery, control, and application of the forces of Nature, why should they not, in the course of a million years, contrive to arrest the seeming tendency of our solar system to self-destruction? In a century and a half much has been done; what may not be done in ten thousand centuries in a 'square fight' of the quick faculties of mind against the slow operations of matter? Our foremost men of science are mere babes in knowledge, as well as in power, compared to the men who will rise in the next thousand years, if science and invention go on at their present continually accelerated pace. Why, on this principle, should not man at the end of a million years obtain control of the whole solar system?

The seriousness with which John Fiske draws the gloomy picture, has been purposely put first to heighten the contrast to this flippant, almost jaunty, and typically French, suggestion of a possibility of escape. Its obvious inadequacy in concerning itself only with the little corner of the universe in which man is directly interested, when the sweep of those great apparent tendencies stops not short of the farthest bounds which science can discern, need not be commented on. The whole suggestion is so fanciful and airy while appealing to a scientific possibility for basis, is so ingenuous and audacious yet unreal in substance, as to affect one like a bit out of one of Jules Verne's stories. It indeed seemingly places mind above matter, yet it really places the soul below matter—a refinement of materialism. For its suggestion goes no deeper than the problem of continuing the material universe, and ignores all the inner questionings and inspirations that lend to the universe a fitting dramatic purpose.

If it be simply a question of averting the apparent crushing of the empty shell there is but little in M. Renan's suggestion beyond flattery of man's puny powers—a flattery that is, even if true, a mockery. What remains but the apostrophe of Henley, apostle of modern pessimism:

" Maker and breaker,
I am the ebb and the flood
Here and Hereafter.
Sped through the tangle and coil
Of infinite nature,
Viewless and soundless I fashion all being.
Taker and Giver,
I am the womb and the grave,
The Now and the Ever."

The attitude of a gifted mind towards the sum of phenomena, as if mere greatness and vastness argued a difference in kind and not of degree, is largely determined by the predominating influence of an age. At times it may lead to an exaggeration of man's greatness, at times to an exaggeration of his littleness. Green, the historian, points out that the spirit of the last quarter of the sixteenth century, culminating in its wonderful display of intellectual activity in learning, literature and travel, so dominated Shakespeare that mere theological questions had for him no apparent interest. So absorbed was the great master in Man, in the infinite variety of his character and power, that Man's relation to the universe seemed merely incidental.

By the reverse of this, one—like Renan,—dominated by the scientific

spirit of the age, may indeed originate an audaciously brilliant and ingenious theory of the power that science may confer on Man—a theory that seems to raise him to the position of a god in one of the old mythologies. But by laying the stress on what Man can do, rather than on what Man is, such a theory really dishonors him, offering no further basis for a belief in "the reasonableness of the universe," without which all speculation is materialism, gloss it over as one may. It leaves out of account "life, love and aspiration," which alone enoble existence in a universe, however grand its phenomena, or vast its extent, or perfect its harmony.

This contrast between the philosophy which contents itself with mere phenomena, and the philosophy which sees in man the greatest phenomenon of all, and pries into the secrets of existence, is as old as the ancients. Thus Seneca, as translated by quaint Thomas Lodge, writes to Lucilius of a broad spirit of research: "This is the more high and courageous; it giveth itself a larger scope, and not content with that which she discovereth by the eyes, suspecteth that there is somewhat more greater and more fairer, which Nature hath locked from our sight."

ARTHUR REED KIMBALL.

THE AMERICAN COMMON SCHOOLS.

DANGERS threatening the common schools in this republic, arising from religious controversy, have from time to time appeared, and in most instances have been happily and successfully averted.

The principal assaults, and they have recently taken on great boldness, have been in the direction of demands for the division of the school fund on denominational lines, in order that systematic sectarian religious instruction might be given at the expense of the State. But these demands cannot be assented to without annihilating the common school system, and without the destruction of the conceded American principle of the complete separation of Church and State.

The legal status of the common school in each State, from both the secular and the religious standpoint, is dependent upon that State's constitution and legislative enactments. There are in these interests certain fundamental principles common to the entire country, certain uniform laws bearing upon the common-school system, giving it a kind of autonomy, and, so to speak, establishing a non partisan and unsectarian republic of letters within the body politic.

The people dividing as they will into religious sects, the individual interests of each sect must be advanced by its own effort and at its own cost. The common-school system uninterrupted and honestly worked has all the power necessary to the attainment of its conceded and legitimate purpose, and that is, to largely promote the well-being of the State through an intelligent and moral citizenship.

Deriving from the people the means for its support, it has legal authority and accountability and moral responsibility. Supported by all, and free to all, there must be nothing about it to which any unprejudiced citizen of the republic can rationally object, and each must use it so as not to interfere with the rights and duties of others.

The governmental power which assesses and collects taxes cannot be employed to promote or repress the interest of any secular or religious section of the citizenship, or for any purpose less than the impartial and highest good of all. Religious education belonging primarily to the family and